1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

692 his (the son's) wife. The chief's daughter (who related the incident), now intervened between father and son, and said that she got a thrashing for her pains. But this is the only concrete instance which I can quote, and it is obviously one of domestic rather than judicial authority. Nor, again, is there any other judicial mechanism. It is popularly supposed that the 'elders' were in the habit of punishing offences: in the old predecadent days, it is said, they would punish with death the infringement of certain tabus. Without attempting a wholesale denial of such a condition in Papua, I must confess I have met with no trace of it in my own researches; and among the Orokaiva at any rate it is needless to say that the system did not exist. On the whole, one is struck by the high degree of personal freedom. For, apart from the restrictive power of custom and tradition, the native is left to do a good deal as he likes; so much so that one man, whatever his status, is reluctant to answer for another, to lay down what he will do or should do. 'He himself', he will say, with a certain inflection of the voice that dismisses all responsibility. At all events there are in Orokaiva society certainly no personal guardians of the law. This being the case with criminal offences, it is more than ever so with regard to civil offences. Natives are found 627 somewhat disinclined to meddle in the affairs or quarrels of 578 individuals, unless it be with merely pacificatory intentions or else in active partisanship. In these two ways interference is met with frequently enough. A number of bystanders will sometimes combine to separate and appease two men who are actually fighting or who (as sometimes appears) are mutually bluffing and suffer themselves rather willingly to be drawn apart. This is an amorphous kind of control, and the interference is merely in the interests of peace and quiet. On the other hand, the two disputants may be respectively joined by their immediate relatives and friends, when, so far from adjudication and the restraint or punishment of the offender, we get only an extension of the quarrel. Such partisanship is so characteristic that it is difficult to picture a situation, whether relating to criminal or civil offence, in which the group as a whole would actually punish one of

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

its members. I have no concrete instance of this kind, and it seems likely that, as far as the Orokaiva are concerned, the offender would always find some supporters, and the result would be two parties confronting one another.

The Sanctions of Morality

It is clear that the sanctions of Orokaiva morality are something less solid than legal authority, and that there are virtually no guardians of the law. We may look for a supernatural guardian, i.e. for a supernatural sanction; but except within a limited field of conduct we should look in vain. By the supernatural sanction I mean the desire to please or the fear of offending any of those occult beings which are felt to possess more than human powers; and in Orokaiva religion, as we have seen, such beings are first and foremost, indeed almost exclusively, identified with the spirits of the dead, of whom the living stand in very real fear. The supernatural sanction, however, may be very briefly dismissed, for except in relation to semi-religious observances it cannot be said to exercise much influence. Though if we allowed a place in our list of native virtues to filial piety, even limited to piety of the posthumous kind, we should be dealing with what is truly one of the most important obligations in native conduct and one which is to a great extent dependent on the supernatural sanction. But this hardly comes within the scope of our present subject.

As for the sanctions which govern ordinary conduct, the relevant data point to a threefold division, viz. (1) the fear of retaliation, (2) the fear of public reprobation, and (3) the sympathetic sanction. These will be dealt with in turn, the last-mentioned obviously requiring some explanation.

Retaliation. This sanction naturally operates in regard to civil rather than criminal offences. Generally speaking, the retaliation will take either of two forms—direct violence or the more subtle method of sorcery; or, more correctly, retaliation is envisaged in either of these forms (for with physical retaliation no less than magical, the dread of it is out of all proportion to the actual practice of it). There is

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

627 no lack of instances of retaliatory violence, however. In cases of adultery it was recognized as an ordinary thing; so much so that informants have reckoned the Government punishment of gaol as but a poor substitute for the old-fashioned use of spear and stone club. Not only was the co-respondent formerly liable to attack from the husband, but I have a case in which a husband, finding his wife *in delicto*, killed the woman while her lover made good his escape. Ordinary theft might lead to the same violent redress. A man, finding a woman stealing in his garden, immediately struck her on the back with a pineapple club; another, under similar provocation, entered the thief's house and hit him on the head with a stone. Interference with garden boundaries has been a fruitful cause of actual fighting, and informants have related how they fought one another with spears, clubs, and shields over this matter, though always, it has appeared, without fatal results. In another case the cause was a usurpation of fishing rights. Except for a complete absence of any formality or any rules of combat, these fights might be spoken of as duels. But it seems that the combatants are not bent on killing, nor are they altogether reluctant to be separated; and the most striking feature of such engagements is that they commonly end in a mutual exchange of gifts—pigs or dogs—by way of peace-making. In one or two cases the culprit has made no show of fight, but, very possibly from a sense of guilt and deserts received, has 'taken his medicine'. In certain of these private quarrels, again, the rest of the group have abstained from taking any part whatever, as if they approved of the act of vengeance; in which we may perhaps see one of the earliest steps toward legal punishment, i.e. the countenancing of the retaliatory act which eventually becomes the legalization of it.

626 The second kind of retaliation, viz. sorcery, exercises a still more important influence on conduct. The threats of it, which are not uncommon, and the dread of it which is ever-present, together make one of the most powerful deterrents against wrongdoing. A simple instance is seen in the protection marks described on pp. 323–4. It is true that these signs are often regarded or obeyed automatically

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

to keep on friendly terms with the other members of the sympathy-group, and I shall refer to it as the Sympathetic Sanction. This considerateness is constantly evinced in daily life, e.g. by a reticence regarding the peculiarities of one's neighbours, by an absence of any cruel competitive spirit by which one man seeks profit at another's expense, even by the reluctance to exercise compulsion on another individual; and I believe that the common regard for property rights is supported by this sanction more strongly than by the fear of retaliation or of public censure, which are rather in the nature of reinforcements; for Orokaiva property, for instance, is nearly always safe from the thief even when he is absolutely free from the risk of detection, and I believe he respects it primarily out of consideration for its owner.

But it is from the negative instances that we may most safely deduce the value of the sympathetic sanction; that is to say, when the sanction has failed to work and some personal offence has been committed, we may observe the psychological effect upon the offender. In such an event the offender is amply punished by being thoroughly sorry for his victim and thoroughly ashamed of himself. We may consider a simple instance (though in our eyes a somewhat extraordinary one), viz. when a man inadvertently uses the name of his brother-in-law, which the Orokaiva regards as a very grave insult. The unfortunate offender will throw his hands up with a despairing gesture and hang his head in shame and confusion which are truly comical to behold; while the brother-in-law, if he chance to have overheard, will be deeply offended and, strangely enough, covered with equal shame. The matter can only be mended by a gift.

The conciliatory gift is a characteristic way of compensating for personal wrong. In a case previously referred to (p. 186), where a man had given a youth some feathers to wear before his formal investiture with the *kokumbari*, and

for the feelings of others, I think that the statement is generally true of the Papuan' (Sir Hubert Murray, *Papua of To-day*, p. 223). Upon looking up this passage I was so struck by its appositeness to the present chapter, that I suspect it must have had something to do with shaping the general views expressed therein, more indeed than I realised when writing.

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

627 431 by so doing had offended the boy's relatives, he immediately sought to make amends. He left the village, but presently came striding back with a half-grown pig across his shoulders; holding the animal by the hind legs he swung it round and dashed its head against the butt of a coco-nut palm, and then flung it dead at the feet of the man he had offended. Not many moments after, I saw one of the latter's brothers enter the village with a fine dog on his shoulders and go through precisely the same performance, killing it against the same tree and offering it as a return present. The pay-back of the conciliatory gift is indeed almost the regular thing: there are numerous instances of quarrels and fights over such matters as theft or interference with garden boundaries, which have been settled eventually by an exchange of pigs, not only the offender but the victim also showing a genuine desire to resume friendly relations. It is 626 152 not to be supposed, of course, that the sympathetic sanction is infallible. The man who does wrong to another no doubt often 'gets away with it', remaining undetected and perhaps suffering few regrets; but there is no question that he is often exceedingly contrite. It would almost seem that the victim plays upon the feelings of the offender to secure this result, though it would not do invariably to attribute any such definite intention to a man who is deeply affected by a sense of wrong. But the Orokaiva can on occasion be very sorry for himself, and it would seem that he wants others to be sorry for him, and particularly the man who has wronged him. His attitude is not so much 'I'll make you sorry for what you have done' as 'I'll make you sorry for me'; and so he takes 'the revenge of being injured'. Accordingly we find a person under a sense of wrong going to extraordinary lengths of self-castigation, from merely fasting or running away from home for a while, to delivering himself up to an enemy tribe or hanging himself from a tree. I have seen a dozen water-melons hacked into fragments and strewn upon the track. Their owner, finding one of them stolen, had demolished the whole crop and carried them to the path where the thief, whose identity he did not know, would pass and realize what he had done. Similarly I have seen a young

2: Williams E, G-5 (1923-1925) 1928
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

doubt often accused of bringing it on. It is not to be supposed that weather-control belongs exclusively to the exponents of the new cult. It is merely an old-time institution which they have adapted to their own purpose; but this purpose is not always wholly in the public interest. It might probably be said that to the benevolence of magic there is always a reverse or malevolent side—sorcery. The native doctor is believed in because of some secret powers, or some secret methods: directly he uses these for an anti-social end he becomes a sorcerer. It is unnecessary to say that the sorcerer is believed to use his evil powers far more often than he actually attempts to use them: he is a sorcerer more by public opinion than by his own intent. But in this credulity he has the weapon for terrorism and extortion if he care to make use of it. A native doctor is a potential sorcerer: he can strike as well as cure.

Even when he merely refuses to cure he falls under suspicion among his neighbours. It was reported to me that a certain *Baigona* man was refusing to treat a patient. The informant—first brother to the patient—asked that the doctor might be haled before the magistrate and sent to jail. He had every confidence in the skill of the *Baigona* man, and considered it a dastardly thing that he should refuse to treat the dying man. Nowadays it is admitted that *Baigona* was full of sorcery. But the *Baigona* cult is virtually a thing of the past and witnesses will discourse of it with freedom. With regard to the Taro cult they hold their tongues, or guard them. *A priori*, however, there is good reason to suppose that the Taro men do practise a certain amount of sorcery.

One or two positive instances may be given in which the Taro men were apparently guilty of the offence. Quite recently the *Diroga* was brought to the village of Aruruta, where it flourished with true evangelistic vigour. Soon after the magistrate at Ioma was astonished to be confronted by a whole round-up of prisoners from the newly converted Aruruta, brought in by several con-

2: Williams E, G-5 (1923-1925) 1928
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

stables from the surrounding villages. The police brought a charge of sorcery against their prisoners, which was naturally dismissed, while the officious but possibly well-meaning guardians of the law were sent home in disgrace. The incident which gave rise to the raid, however, is worth recording. A woman of Koninida, married in Aruruta, was informed that the *Diroga* men intended to 'spear' (*kajari*) her brother. She hastened to inform him and the other people of Koninida, who to forestall the attack enlisted the support of their neighbours, and descended on Aruruta with several pairs of jangling handcuffs. The spearing, be it understood, was as it were an immaterial but more than a merely figurative thing. The *Diroga* men carry spears, but they do not hurl them at their victims: they speak to them and bid them do the mischief invisibly. Then the victim is stricken down with a sickness.

A man of another village, who had been down with fever for a week, said he had been 'speared' by the *Diroga* men of Aruruta. Some of his pupils informed Mr. Holland that they had been threatened with 'spearing' by *Diroga* men of another village. They explained that it was a 'spirit spear' which would make them die; and the pupils and their parents were thoroughly intimidated.

In the regular sorcery of the Orokaiva the agent affects his victim directly. The theory of Taro sorcery, however, is that the spirit (of the taro or the dead) enters into and injures the man who has offended it. The commonest way of offending the spirit is to offend the Taro man, to abuse him or quarrel with him, or to neglect to fete him in the proper manner. The spirit which visits or possesses the injured Taro man will enter into the offender and make him ill. Taro men alone can cure the illness by extracting or driving out the spirit. Thus we see the hold which the exponents of the cult have upon the Philistines. They have the powers of *kaiembo* or sorcerers (though they abjure the name); but they